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BOROUGH OF BEWDLEY

Annual Reports

OF

Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector

FOR

:: 1949 ::

MILLER THE PRINTER : BEWDLEY. Tel. 164

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WATER AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

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OFFICERS

DR. R. W. MARKHAM, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health

MR. S. J. ROWE, M.Inst.R.A., F.I.Hsg., M.Inst.H.E.,
Sanitary Inspector and Borough Surveyor

MR. E. N. SINCLAIR, A.M.I.S.E., M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Inspector

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BEWDLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year 1949.

In accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Health, the report is divided into the following sections:—

"A" Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

"B" General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

"C" Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

"D" Housing.

"E" Inspection and Supervision of Food.

"F" Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

SECTION "A"

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	3,681
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1949) according to Rate Books	1,386
Rateable Value	£19,548
Sum represented by One Penny Rate	£76/9/6.25
Registrar General's estimate of resident population (mid 1949)	4,830

The principal sources of employment are carpet weaving at Kidderminster, light engineering and other similar undertakings outside the district, and a limited number employed on agriculture. In addition a few are employed in nearby small mines.

Within the district there is a small needle factory where only female labour is employed, a saw mill, a factory processing feeding stuffs and seeds and, remaining from the old Bewdley industries, a brass foundry, rope works and leather works.

Vital Statistics for the Area.

Live Births.

	1949				1948		
	Total.	Male.	Female.		Total.	Male.	Female
Legitimate	77	40	37	...	98	48	50
Illegitimate	3	2	1	...	3	1	2
Total	80	42	38	...	101	49	52

The Live Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population of the Borough was: 1949, 16.5 (1948, 21.2).

The Live Birth rate for England and Wales was: 1949, 16.7 (1948, 17.9).

Still Births.

	1949				1948		
	Total.	Male.	Female.		Total.	Male.	Female
Legitimate	1	—	1	...	4	3	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—	...	1	—	1
Total	1	—	1		5	3	2

The Still Birth rate per 1,000 births (Live and Still) was: 1949, 12.3 (1948, 47.17).

The Still Birth rate for England and Wales was: 1949, 0.39 (1948, 0.42).

Deaths.

1949				1948		
Total.	Male.	Female.		Total.	Male.	Female
70	37	33	...	68	33	35

The Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was: 1949, 14.49 (1948, 14.27).

The Death rate for the whole of England and Wales was: 1949, 11.7 (1948, 10.3).

Maternal Mortality.

There was one death of a mother associated with child-birth during the year.

The Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 total births for 1949 was 12.3.

The Maternal Mortality rate for England and Wales for 1949 was 0.98.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

	1949				1948		
	Total.	Male.	Female.		Total.	Male.	Female
Legitimate	1	—	1	...	5	3	2
Illegitimate	—	—	—	...	—	—	—
Total	1	—	1		5	3	2

The Infantile Mortality rate was: 1949, 12.5 (1948, 49.5).

The Infantile Mortality rate for England and Wales was: 1949, 32 (1948, 34).

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	7
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	Nil

Causes of Death.

Ref. No.		Male.	Female.
4.	Whooping Cough	—	1
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	1
9.	Influenza	1	1
14, 15 & 16.	Cancer	3	4
18.	Intracranial Vascular Lesions	7	1
19.	Heart Disease	16	15
20.	Other disorders of Circulatory System	2	—
21.	Bronchitis	5	1
28.	Nephritis	—	2
30.	Other maternal causes	—	1
31.	Premature Births	—	1
33.	Suicide	1	—
34.	Road Traffic Accident	—	2
35.	Other violent causes	1	—
36.	All other causes	1	3
	Total	37	33

SECTION "B"

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

Laboratory Services.

The examination of food, milk and water is carried out by the County Council Laboratory. The other examinations are now carried out by the Public Health Laboratory at Worcester Royal Infirmary.

Ambulance Service.

This is now provided by Worcestershire County Council as Local Health Authority and is based on Kidderminster.

Home Nursing and Health Visiting.

There are two District Nurses available in the Borough, one for Bewdley and the other for Wribbenhall. The Wribbenhall nurse also acts as Health Visitor, a duty which is carried out in Bewdley by a separate Health Visitor.

Clinics.

An Ante-Natal Clinic is held once a fortnight at the Wribbenhall Parish Room, a doctor being in attendance monthly.

An Infant Welfare Clinic is also held fortnightly with a doctor in attendance monthly when Diphtheria Immunisation and Vaccination are carried out.

Hospitals.

The following hospitals administered by the Midland Regional Hospital Board are available:—

1. The Kidderminster General Hospital for general medical and surgical cases.
2. The Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital at Stourport.
3. Hayley Green Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases.

Tuberculosis.

A weekly dispensary is held at the Kidderminster General Hospital and a Sanatorium is situated at Knightwick (Regional Board).

After Care.

An After-care Sub-committee has been established by the County Council to administer this service in this district in conjunction with the other districts in the Kidderminster Divisional Area.

Venereal Disease.

A treatment centre is operated at the Kidderminster General Hospital by the Regional Hospital Board.

Domestic Help Service.

Under arrangements made by the Local Health Authority, a Home Help Service has been established in the district and is administered locally by the W.V.S.

Section 47, National Assistance Act, 1948

No action has been taken by the Council under this section during the year.

SECTION "C"

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply.

1. The water supply has been satisfactory both in quantity and quality.
2. Samples of water for bacteriological analysis are taken monthly and for complete chemical analysis twice yearly.
3. The water is not plumbo-solvent.
4. No action was necessary for any form of contamination of the piped water supply.

5a. The number of houses supplied from the public water mains direct to houses is 1,319. Population supplied approximately 4,827.

5b. 48 houses are supplied by standpipes; population supplied 165. 20 houses obtain water from private supplies; population supplied 69.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The greater part of the district has a sewer available. Sewage is pumped to the Disposal Works used jointly by the Borough of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn U.D.C. and the Borough of Bewdley. The system has proved satisfactory apart from a mechanical failure at the pumping station which was speedily rectified.

No serious nuisance has arisen and certain modifications and improvements have been carried out under the supervision of the Health Department.

SECTION "D"

Housing.

24 houses were completed by the Corporation during the year. In addition 5 houses were completed by private enterprise.

At the end of the year there still remained 304 applications for Council houses.

It is apparent that despite the steady progress on new construction, the situation with regard to housing applicants remains unchanged.

Camping Sites.

The five licensed Camping Sites in the Borough are inspected regularly. The Corporation now collects all refuse from the camping fields and this arrangement has resulted in improving the hygiene of the camps considerably. On the whole there is very little nuisance throughout the year, except for two weeks, when due to the tremendous influx of tent campers sanitary facilities are severely taxed.

The whole question of the location and character of camping sites in the County is the subject of a detailed enquiry now being carried out by the County Planning Department. No decisions have been reached so far, and this is proving a hindrance to the Health Department in their work of supervising these sites. It is hoped that a definite plan for the future will be worked out without delay.

SECTION "E"

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector during the year.

Food Poisoning.

There was no outbreak of food poisoning during the year.

SECTION "F"

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The number of children immunised during the year, either at Clinics, Schools, or by the General Practitioners, was as follows:

1.	Under 5 years	69
2.	5 - 14 years	5
3.	Reinforcing Doses	38
	Total ...	112

At the end of 1949 the percentage figures of immunised children estimated in the two age groups 0 - 5 and 5 - 14 years were 57.8 and 23.6 respectively.

No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

Notifications.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year are shown in the following table:—

Disease	Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to hospital.	Deaths Total
Scarlet Fever	19	8	—
Measles	110	—	—
Whooping Cough ...	94	—	1*
Pneumonia	7	1	2

* Cause of death given by Registrar as Pneumonia.

Tuberculosis.

The following table gives particulars of new cases of tuberculosis and deaths from the disease in the area during the year.

Age Periods.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
35	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	3	—	1	1	1	—	—

Conclusion.

The services provided in the Borough are satisfactory, and are available to all except those in the most outlying areas. The Council have made the best of available resources, and the sanitary conditions prevailing generally in the district give no cause for reproach. However, there are a number of old properties, now only suitable for demolition, which present a difficult problem. It is hoped that by limited "essential" repairs it will be possible to retain them until better accommodation is available.

The building of new houses in the district has made steady progress, but the task of finding homes remains as great as ever. It is to be hoped that the Council will use every possible method to speed up the housing programme and so help to eradicate the cause of much domestic unhappiness and illness.

I should like to thank the Mayor, Members of the Council and the Council's Staff for their help and co-operation during the year.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

R. W. MARKHAM,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

For Year ending 31st December, 1949

Housing.

Private Enterprise. Five houses were completed during the year.

Corporation. Twenty-four houses were completed on the Bark Hill Estate during the year.

Squatters Camps. Work on the construction of a service road at the Dog Lane Camp was completed during the year.

House Refuse.

House refuse is collected weekly in the town and once every fortnight in outlying areas, and is taken to the authorised tip on the outskirts of the town.

Trade Refuse.

In addition to the removal of house refuse, 15cwts. of trade refuse are removed and disposed of weekly.

Salvage.

During the year it was found impossible to dispose of salvage at an economic price, and upon the repeal of the Compulsory Salvage Order, the Council resolved that the collection of salvage should be discontinued.

Rodent Control.

The following rodent infestations have been dealt with during the year:—

Private dwellings	187
Business premises	32
Other Infestations ...	19
	238

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

During the year 78 tins of varied foodstuffs and 133 lbs. of margarine were condemned as unfit for human consumption.

Under new Milk Regulations, the Council is no longer responsible for the inspection of cowsheds and the control of the one pasteurising plant in the Borough has passed to the County Council.

Food preparing premises are inspected regularly to ensure a satisfactory standard of hygiene.

Animals for human consumption are not slaughtered in the Borough.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

The supervision of the five licensed camping sites in the Borough has again figured prominently in the duties performed during the year.

Every opportunity has been taken to improve the hygiene of the camps, and the improvements carried out include the extension of the water supply to one camp and the improvement of the water supply and night soil disposal facilities at another camp.

The hygiene of the camps has benefited considerably from the regular refuse collection which is maintained by the Corporation.

Inspections.

The following is a list of the inspections carried out:—

Dwelling houses	562
Factories	12
Nuisances	57
Dairies and Cowsheds ...	17
Infectious Diseases ...	33
Food Premises	64
Drainage	158
Rodent Infestation ...	6
Tents, Vans and Sheds	67
Other Inspections ...	12
	988

I am,

Your obedient servant,

S. J. ROWE,

Sanitary Inspector.